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THE BIOLOGICAL ANTAGONISM BETWEEN CALCIUM AND MAGNESIUM

In a recent number of the BOTANICAL GAZETTE (49:41–50. 1910), CHAS. B. LIPMAN stated that in regard to *Bacillus subtilis* an antagonism does not exist between calcium and magnesium. This fact is quite natural, however, since the microbes (with rare exceptions, as for example Azotobacter) do not require lime for their life and multiplication, and on the other hand an antagonism does not exist between those elements themselves, but merely between their functions. Magnesium salts, in the usual biological concentrations, cannot exert any poisonous action on lower fungi and algae, hence there is no need of any antagonistic element. These points have been extensively treated in a paper entitled "The physiological rôle of mineral nutrients in plants,"[1] to which the reader may be referred.—OSCAR LOEW, *Munich, Germany.*

[1] Bull. 45, Bur. Pl. Ind., U. S. Dept. Agric. 1903; especially on p. 44 and pp. 49–54.